

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

**Listings of Claims:**

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1. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head comprising:  
a lower core<sup>2</sup> layer;  
a gap layer<sup>6</sup> formed on the lower core layer, optionally with a lower pole layer therebetween;  
an upper pole layer<sup>7</sup> formed on the gap layer;  
an upper core layer<sup>12</sup> formed on the upper pole layer; and  
a Gd-defining layer for defining the depth in the height direction of the joint surface between the gap layer and the upper pole layer, the Gd-defining layer being formed on the lower core layer (toward the back) in the height direction from a surface facing a recording medium, <sup>NR</sup>  $g \leq p$   
wherein the width in the track width direction of the gap layer is smaller than or equal to the width in the track width direction of the upper pole layer when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

referred to

2. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein the width in the track width direction of the gap layer is smaller than or equal to the width in the track width direction of the upper pole layer and the width in the track width direction of the lower pole layer when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

3. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein the width in the track width direction of the gap layer is smaller than or equal to the width in the track width direction of the upper pole layer, and the width in the track width direction of the lower pole layer is substantially equal to the width in the track width direction of the gap layer when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

} same claim(s)

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4. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein the minimum width in the track width direction of the gap layer is 0.4  $\mu\text{m}$  or less when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

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5. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein the thickness of the lower pole layer is in the range of 0.25 to 0.5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

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6. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein the Gd-defining layer extends from both sides of a pole section comprising the gap layer, the upper pole layer (and optionally, the lower pole layer, and each of the extending sections of the Gd-defining layer has a width of 0 to 4  $\mu\text{m}$ .

would  
not  
exist

7. (Withdrawn)

8. (Withdrawn)

9. (Withdrawn)

10. (Withdrawn)

11. (Withdrawn)

12. (Withdrawn)

13. (Withdrawn)

14. (Withdrawn)

15. (Withdrawn)

16. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head comprising:

a lower core layer;

a gap layer formed on the lower core layer;

an upper pole layer formed on the gap layer;

an upper core layer formed on the upper pole layer; and

a Gd-defining layer for defining the depth in the height direction of the joint surface between the gap layer and the upper pole layer, the Gd-defining layer being

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formed on the lower core layer (toward the back) in the height direction from a surface facing a recording medium,

wherein the width in the track width direction of the gap layer is smaller than or equal to the width in the track width direction of the upper pole layer when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

4 ~ 17. (Previously Added) A thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 16, wherein the minimum width in the track width direction of the gap layer is  $0.4 \mu\text{m}$  or less when viewed from the surface facing the medium.

18. (Withdrawn)

19. (Withdrawn)

20. (Withdrawn)

21. (Withdrawn)

22. (Withdrawn)

23. (Withdrawn)

24. (Withdrawn)

25. (Withdrawn)

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